Activity 2: Discover a dinosaur

The story of a new species of dinosaur discovered in 2004.

Learning outcomes

Children will:

- develop confidence and skills in creating and portraying a character through drama or writing
- express thoughts and feelings through writing, drama and storytelling
- understand that new dinosaurs are being found today

Story

In 2004 the remains of a very important new dinosaur was discovered by a seven-year-old South American boy called Diego Suarez. His parents were studying rocks in the mountains of Chile while he played nearby. He found an interesting shiny piece of rock and asked his mother about it. She recognised it as a fossilised bone!

Palaeontologists (scientists who study dinosaurs) came to look and discovered more bones nearby. It took nearly 10 years for the fossilised bones to be carefully removed from the rock and studied in detail to work out what the dinosaur looked like when it was alive. To help understand what the dinosaur might have looked when it was alive, the palaeontologists worked with an artist who drew detailed pictures.

The palaeontologists concluded that Diego had discovered a very important fossil of a new species of dinosaur. It had claws and a body like a meat-eating dinosaur, but the teeth of a plant-eating dinosaur! In 2015, the dinosaur was named *Chilesaurus diegosuarezi* after the place where it was found and the boy who found it.
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**Activity 2: Discover a dinosaur**

*Diplodocus* fossils are still being found today. Here is a *Diplodocus* skeleton being excavated in 2017.
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Activity 2: Teacher notes

There are several ways to use this story:

1. Read the story together like a big book from a screen, looking at the pictures alongside the text. You can learn more about this discovery from Professor Paul Barret at nhm.ac.uk/chilesaurus. You could create a comprehension exercise about the story.

2. Use this as a creative writing or drama activity. Imagine that you are Diego and tell the story of how you found a dinosaur bone and what happened next. How does it feel to have a dinosaur named after you? Tell the story through drawing, writing or drama.

3. Use this as a creative writing or drama activity. Imagine you have discovered a dinosaur and tell the story of this adventure through drawing, writing or drama.

You could use these stimulus questions in a writing frame to help develop story ideas.
- Where did you make your discovery?
- Did you look for a dinosaur or did you find it by chance?
- Who helped you to identify it?
- What is special about it? How do you know it is a new type of dinosaur?
- How did you feel when you made your discovery?
- What special feature makes your dinosaur discovery newsworthy?
- What is the dinosaur called?
- What other dinosaurs and animals might have lived at the same time?
- What habitat did it live in?
- How does it feel to have a dinosaur named after you?

You could adapt this activity for any rare or imaginary animal or bird, in any habitat (e.g. jungle or polar region).

You could work in pairs where one child is a journalist interviewing the other to find out the story of the discovery.

English curriculum links (Key Stage 1)

English

Year 1: Writing: Composition

Pupils should be taught to:
- write sentences by:
  - saying out loud what they are going to write about
  - composing a sentence orally before writing it
  - sequencing sentences to form short narratives
  - re-reading what they have written to check that it makes sense
- discuss what they have written with the teacher or other pupils
- read their writing aloud, clearly enough to be heard by their peers and the teacher

Year 2: Reading: Comprehension

Pupils should be taught to:
- develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by:
  - discussing the sequence of events in books and how items of information are related
  - becoming increasingly familiar with and retelling a wider range of stories, fairy stories and traditional tales
  - being introduced to non-fiction books that are structured in different ways
  - recognising simple recurring literary language in stories and poetry
  - discussing and clarifying the meanings of words, linking new meanings to known vocabulary
Year 2: Writing: Composition

Pupils should be taught to:

- develop positive attitudes towards and stamina for writing by:
  - writing narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real and fictional)
  - writing about real events
  - writing for different purposes
- consider what they are going to write before beginning by:
  - planning or saying out loud what they are going to write about
  - writing down ideas and/or key words, including new vocabulary
  - encapsulating what they want to say, sentence by sentence
- make simple additions, revisions and corrections to their own writing by:
  - evaluating their writing with the teacher and other pupils
  - rereading to check that their writing makes sense and that verbs to indicate time are used correctly and consistently, including verbs in the continuous form
  - proofreading to check for errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation (for example, ends of sentences punctuated correctly)
- read aloud what they have written with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear

Scottish curriculum links (Early and First)

Literacy: Experiences and outcomes

Writing: Creating texts

Within real and imaginary situations, I share experiences and feelings, ideas and information in a way that communicates my message. LIT 0–09a

I enjoy exploring events and characters in stories and other texts and I use what I learn to invent my own, sharing these with others in imaginative ways. LIT 0–09b / LIT 0–31a

When listening and talking with others for different purposes, I can exchange information, experiences, explanations, ideas and opinions, and clarify points by asking questions or by asking others to say more. LIT 1–09a

I can convey information, describe events or processes, share my opinions or persuade my reader in different ways. LIT 1–28a / LIT 1–29a

Welsh curriculum links (Foundation Phase)

Language, literacy and communication skills

Range of experiences

Children should be given opportunities to:

- experience a language-rich environment that immerses them in the spoken and written word
- express themselves creatively and imaginatively
- access and share a variety of non-fiction texts, stories and traditional tales from Wales and around the world including those written by significant authors
- mark make or write in a range of genres
- communicate in a range of contexts for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Northern Irish curriculum links (Foundation Phase and Key Stage 1)

Foundation Stage: Language and literacy

Framework for literacy development

Reading.
Writing.